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POEMS

BY

CATHARINE GEORGE WARD.

POEMS

BY

CATHARINE GEORGE WARD,

LATE OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL, EDINBURGH.

DEDICATED BY PERMISSION TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE

COUNTESS OF DALKEITH.

Edinburgh:

PRINTED BY JOHN MOIR, ROYAL BANK CLOSE.

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE COUNTESS OF DALKEITH.

MADAM,

When I recollect every instance of your Ladyship's kindness,—when I consider the spirit of benevolence which reigns in your exalted character, I am unequal to the task of expressing my admiration, or my gratitude. I wish for greater powers than nature has allotted to me, that I might then pour forth my heartfelt thanks, and, in all *the languages of the world pay homage to the virtues which adorn your mind, to the humanity which led you to befriend an oppressed stranger, and to that universal goodness, for which all ranks in life (whether humble or exalted) reverence you!*

I am permitted the happiness of laying at your Ladyship's feet the humble offerings of my Muse; and in that privilege feel myself flattered beyond description:—Conscious they receive the only merit they possess, in being thought worthy to be accepted by your Ladyship; to whom I must ever remain deeply impressed by a sense of obligation; and have the honour to subscribe myself,

YOUR LADYSHIP's

Most devoted

And obliged humble Servant,

CATHARINE GEORGE WARD

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THE

BARON OF WINTERSIDE.

A TALE.

WHERE yonder lofty turrets rise,
And proudly seem to greet the skies,
Midst mountains, desolate and bare,
A wealthy BARON flourish'd there;
In all the luxuries of state
And pomp, which wait upon the great.
In mightiness this BARON grew,
But he, alas! was lov'd by few:
For av'rice reign'd within his heart,
There gen'rous feelings took no part.
The beggar curs'd him to his face,
And wish'd a famine on his race:
Crafty and cruel, puff'd with pride,
Was the BARON of WINTERSIDE.

Then, tell me, Fortune, if you can,
Why heap *good gifts* on such a man?
A blooming son, in virtue brave,
The gods to this proud BARON gave.
The youth was like the roseate morn,
Whose cheerful smiles did all adorn:
His eyes beam'd bright, but, like the dove,
Were gentle as the God of Love.
In exercise he had been train'd,
And fond of sports he still remain'd;
Clad like a huntsman, oft he'd go
Through summer's heat, and winter's snow;
And oft the BARON'S soul would melt,
When at his feet young EDWARD knelt,
And told a tale of soft distress,
Or bid his father's bounty bless
The neighbouring poor, that sued for bread,
Unknowing where to lay their head.
His flinty heart with pity mov'd,
(For EDWARD was by him belov'd);
And now, the festival drew near,
To celebrate the happy year
Which gave the blooming EDWARD birth:
Now, nought but songs of joy and mirth
Reign'd in the castle's gloomy wall,
Where EDWARD gave a splendid ball!

But oh ! accurs'd and fatal hour,
Doom'd to blast so fair a flower !
For at that splendid ball was seen,
A maid surpassing Beauty's queen ;
A maid, who more than mortal seem'd,
Angelic sweetness round her beam'd ;
Her eyes were of an azure bright,
And shone with soft resplendent light ;
Her cheeks disclos'd the half-blown rose,
She look'd the angel of repose.
" O lovely creature !" EDWARD cried,
" Might I but call thee—destin'd bride,
" A monarch's ransom I wou'd give
" In those bewitching smiles to live !
" Tell me thy name, sweet gentle maid,"—
" I'm call'd BOSALBA, Sir," she said :
Like light'ning, then, she quickly flew
And left him, banish'd from her view.
In vain he sought her o'er and o'er,
But fair BOSALBA came no more.
Through woods, thro' wilds, and meadows green,
He wanders with a pensive mein,
And soon he languish'd in despair,
For no BOSALBA found he there.
The bloom forsook his manly cheek,
Which once did health and joy bespeak ;

No longer blythe, no longer gay,
In grief he pin'd his hours away.
The BARON saw—at length was mov'd,
And sought the maid whom EDWARD lov'd—
But found her origin obscure—
He storm'd, he rav'd, his bosom tore,
And thus address'd his only son:—
"Must you then wed with such a one?
"May dire destruction overtake,
"Whene'er a bride, of her, you make:
"Accurs'd the hour when first she came
"To blast thy health, and damp thy fame!
"But soon this beauty shall repent,
"And from these mountains far be sent."
—"Relentless Father!" EDWARD cried,
Sunk at his feet,—where, lo! he died.

FAIR FANNY.

1

FAIR FANNY once was gay, and smil'd,
And peace liv'd in her breast,
Till love of every hope beguil'd
The luckless maid of rest.

2

Blythe as the morn, she danc'd, she sung
The fleeting hours away;
Happy amidst the village throng,
To her each month seem'd May.

3

Belov'd of parents, good and mild,
Whose all of wealth was given
To deck the lovely blooming child,
They deem'd the gift of heaven!

4

And gentle FANNY lov'd again
The guardians of her youth:
She shar'd their pleasure, felt their pain,
And reverenc'd their truth.

5

And now, when summer gaily smil'd,
She bless'd her happy lot;
And gather'd flow'rets sweet and wild,
To deck their village cot.

6

Ah! luckless morn, when FANNY went
To gather flow'rets fair,
As o'er a rose she stooping bent,
She found a serpent there.

7

Stung to the heart, she feebly cries,
"Ah! must I die so soon!—
"Fly, parents, fly, your FANNY dies!"
And sunk into a swoon.

8

With pity touch'd, a footstep near,
Approach'd where FANNY laid;
On her pale cheek he drop'd a tear,
And rais'd the drooping maid.

9

The subtle poison soon he drew
From gentle FANNY's breast;
Whilst o'er her cheeks as quickly flew
The rose in crimson drest.

10

Of manly and expressive mein,
A face of noble line,
In wars the stranger once had been,
And look'd a soul divine.

11

His tongue in gentle accents flow'd
As FANNY he address'd;
His heart with melting pity glow'd
For her, who seem'd oppress'd.

12

"Thus, to preserve that lovely form
"From the cold arms of death,
"Much more I'd venture, much perform,
"To save that angel breath!

13

"But thou, dear maid, I ne'er can wed,
"'Tis honour bids me fly thee;
"Yet, when life's fleeting hours are fled,
"In death I'll hope to find thee."

14

On FANNY's face, the rose grew pale,
Cold tremblings seize her heart,
She feels her fainting spirits fail,
And saw the youth depart.

15

Ah! hapless fate, why was I born,
Ye cruel powers say:
Or saw that youth, who, like the morn,
Gives brightness to the day!

16

Fair FANNY wanders now forlórn,
And lost to sad despair;
Regretting oft the luckless morn
She gather'd flow'rets fair.

THE VIOLET AND ROSE.

A FULL-BLOWN rose, of beauty vain,
Beheld herself caress'd;
But there 's no pleasure without pain,
—The violet she address'd:

"How durst thou, reptile, come so near
"The garden's lofty pride;
"'Tis I am queen of flowers here,
"Here, I alone preside?

"What arrogance to shew thy face
"Where lovely roses dwell;
"Thou nurseling of a low-born race,
"I never wish'd thee well!"—

"Proud insolent!" the violet cries,
"Let thy rude clamour cease,
"I bloom beneath indulgent skies,
"And lead a life of peace.

" Whilst thou, expos'd to public sight,
" Because thou art more fair,
" Must soon repent that beauty bright
" Which leads thee to a snare."

The gard'ner heard, nor could refrain
To seize the scornful rose,
But left the violet still to reign
In undisturb'd repose,

THE SEA-BOY.

Rock'd by the roaring waters, on the deep,
The Sea-Boy rough, inclines, in gentle sleep,
Unmindful of the wave
Which soon may plunge him with impetuous foam,
Far, far from parents, friends, and much-lov'd home,
Into a watery grave.

Ragged and torn, health decks his chubby face,
And makes him cheerful 'midst the joyial race
Of mess-mates kind and free;
He whistles when the ship glides smooth along,
Or, on the midnight watch he tunes his song
With youthful jollity.

But now, his longing eyes descry the shore,
Where from his mother's arms he last was tore;
He thinks 'twas hard to part:
The vessel 's moor'd,—he drops a joyful tear,
And fondly clasps again that mother dear
With transport to his heart.

TO THE MORNING STAR.

Oh! Morning Star, why rise so bright,
To tell me it is day;
For I have wept and pray'd all night,
And still I weep and pray.
Be witnes, planet, to my grief,
My secret anguish tell:
For that admits of no relief,
And I with mis'ry dwell.

Oh! Morning Star, had I but slept
Unconscious of my state;
Of peace I had not been bereft,
Nor mourn'd my hapless fate,
But while I breathe the anguish'd sigh,
And drop the silent tear,
The distant joys of Hope draw nigh,
And bid me not despair.

Oh ! Morning Star ! now day-light breaks,
The woodlarks tune their song,
And all the busy world awakes,
A gay tumultuous throng.
Then, silver-mantled star, adieu !
For see, thy beauteous face
Fades on my still enraptur'd view,
And day pours in apace.

THE GIPSEY GIRL.

WHY wanders HENRY in despair?
Has Fortune led thee in a snare,
Or hast thou lost thy fav'rite maid?—
He answer'd low, and sighing, said,
"—Ah me! I love a Gipsey Girl!
"A Gipsey Girl,
"Ah me! I love a Gipsey Girl!"

Where didst thou see her, HENRY? tell,
And more I'd ask, where does she dwell?
—"I saw her at the break of morn,
"Sweet as the blossom on the thorn.
"She smil'd—the lovely Gipsey Girl!
"The Gipsey Girl,
"I'm doom'd to love the Gipsey Girl!"

And was she clad in russet gown,
And were her locks of clear nut-brown?
"Yes, she was clad in russet-gown,
"And oh! her locks were clear nut-brown.
"But I have lost my Gipsey Girl!
"Sweet Gipsey Girl,
"How much I lov'd that Gipsey Girl!"

LOVERS VOWS.

Lovers vows are like the air,
Which winds inconstant bear;
Lovers vows resemble dreams
That vanish e'er the morning beams,
—All that is fickle, false, and fair,
To lovers vows we may compare:
From beauty's cheek they steal the rose,
From snowy bosoms take repose,
They fade the lustre of the eye,
And leave the hapless maid to die!

MOON-LIGHT.

Rays of heavenly light appear,
As down my cheek the pensive tears
Of bitter anguish fall!
Whose beams can bid my sorrows rest,
A while can calm my tortur'd breast,
And time long past recall.

To pleasing thoughts alone resign'd,
Come, lovely Moon, and fill my mind
With ideas soft and pure;
Let me not think of Fortune's frown,
Of love betray'd, or friendship flown,
Or ills that I endure.

Yes, 'tis thy soft resplendent light
Conducts the mariner at night,
Upon the wat'ry main;
And travellers through forests chear,
To their lov'd wives and children dear,
In peace return again.

Then lead me to that friendly shore,
Where grief, where pain, is felt no more,
And stormy passions cease:
There adverse fate no more shall vex,
Nor cruel cares my soul perplex,
But all be hush'd to peace.

THE ORPHAN.

If pity e'er drew from thy bosom a sigh,
Let an orphan thy tenderness share;
I'm lost on my way, and no comfort is nigh,
To snatch me from grief and despair.
Alas! even Hope has refus'd to impart
The balm I was wont to receive,
Such woe rends my bosom, and sighs break my heart,
For none will my sorrows relieve.

When I think on the days I have happily spent,
And of friends whom I ne'er shall see more,
Past pleasures are useless, and vain to lament,
Poor MARY was born to endure!
With what anguish fond memory fills!
My parents they died in my arms;
But tho' grief, and tho' penury chills,
The *tear* of *humanity* warms!

THE CONFESSION.

My Walter vow'd he'd be sincere,
He call'd me his beautiful maid;
And I, of my prudence secure,
Ne'er dream'd that fond lovers betray'd.

When zephyrs were fanning the grove,
And primroses blush'd in the vale,
I stole to the arms of my love,
And smil'd when he told his soft tale.

I blush'd as I gave him a kiss,
But twenty he took in return;
Said, how can you frown on my bliss,
For *you*, dearest Mary, I burn!

I gaz'd on his blue eyes so bright,
Angelic he seem'd to my view,
My heart, how it throb'd with delight,
When I thought that my WALTER was true.

The rogue (would you think it) has fled,
Ah! why did I e'er feel love's smart;
Or why did I promise to wed
With WALTER, who stole my fond heart.

TO

THE SNOW-DROP,

AT THE BEGINNING OF SPRING.

SNOW-DROP, earliest flower of Spring!
Array'd in spotless white;
O hither come, and with thee bring
What must all eyes delight.

Sweet flower, diffuse thy charms around,
And deck my bower to-day;
Purity like thine can ne'er be found
Amidst the fair and gay.

With some, 'tis true, the favour'd rose
May be a welcome guest;
But still thy snowy charms disclose
What I admire as best.

On thee each day I will attend
To guard thee from all fears,
And when thou'rt dead I'll be thy friend,
And water thee with tears.

TO

THE PRIMROSE,

AT THE DEPARTURE OF SPRING.

DAUGHTER of Spring, how much I grieve
Thou shouldst thy humble dwelling leave
For some more lofty guest;
How, smiling flower, canst thou bear
To see thy blooming rival near,
In colours gaily drest?

The flaunting rose, fair summer's child,
Like lady gay, wanton, and wild,
Turns to the sportive breeze,—
The fickle breeze that once to you,
Did homage pay when thou wert new,
Nor wanted charms to please.

And must thou yield to beauty's power,
And must thou die, thou gentle flower,
And be forgotten too;
Ah no! again the genial spring
Shall warm thee into life, and bring
Thee blushing to my view.

THE BEGGAR GIRL.

'Tis not the bitter sky she fears,
Nor blast that angry blows:
'Tis not her pensive falling tears,
Nor all the ills she knows!

But oh! the frowns the wealthy give,
And scorn from every eye,
Tell her, unpitied she must live,
Unpitied she must die.

But soon, in yonder starry skies,
Remov'd from earthly care,
Where every gentle spirit flies,—
She'll be an angel there!

LINES TO MISS DUNCAN,

LATE OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL, EDINBURGH, NOW OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

SPORTIVE maid, of sweet simplicity!
Hail! blythe daughter of felicity!
Arch smiler!
Soft beguiler!
Merry as fife, thy tuneful pipe
Rivals the nightingale!

Winning maid, of sprightly feature;
Playful, lively, laughing creature!
Joys await thee!
Peace attend thee!
Fairer than rose, that blushing grows
In Sharon's vale!

TO

THE FAVOURITE DOG

OF

MR JAMES AITKIN,

LATE THE RESPECTED MANAGER OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

COULDST thou but speak, what eloquence were thine,
Thy much-lov'd master to extol;
Oh! that thou couldst, and that the task was thine
To paint the virtue of his soul!
The goodness that enshrines his noble heart,
Where ev'ry generous feeling takes a part;
The mild benignance of his speaking eye,
His voice,—the gentle voice of sympathy!
Should mis'ry claim the pitying tear—
Should frailty sue to be forgiven—
Ne'er will he chide with looks severe,
But in mercy!—copy heaven!
Such is thy Master—happy dog, 'tis true,
Dost thou then wonder if I envy you

The blessings that you daily share,
Thy master's joy! thy master's care!
—Yes, faithful Bacchus, thou and I,
Must mourn thy master 'till we die.

LINES

INSCRIBED TO

MRS BASTER,

OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL EDINBURGH, AND LATE OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN, ON SEEING HER APPEAR IN THE CHARACTER OF ALICIA, IN THE TRAGEDY OF JANE SHORE.

SEE where she comes! her powers confess'd
Now meet an advocate in ev'ry breast;
And Caledonian hearts must freely own
Her just pretensions to the Thespian throne;
Can genius sicken, or neglected be,
Before an audience, generous and free?
No! let her come, and nightly shall her cause
Plead for itself, and meet deserv'd applause.
Critics, impartial let your sentence be,
Nor idly scan the merit you must see;
For, sure, amongst the rules of common sense,
Genius, at least, may claim a precedence;
If genius, then, can melt the human heart,
Or sense, or feeling, can a charm impart,
A double portion of your smiles, oh! give:
And bid *Alicia* in your favour live!

TO

THE SAME LADY,

IN THE CHARACTER OF PAUL, IN THE OPERA OF PAUL AND VIRGINIA.

THE woodlark pours his matin song
Upon the ravish'd ear;
Sweeter than all the feather'd throng
The woodlark's notes appear;
The shepherd's pipe, o'er hill and dale,
Make ev'ry valley ring:
And through each grove he tells his tale—
Of love delights to sing:
BASTER, in softer notes than these,
Such melody imparts,—
She sings! ah! can she fail to please,
Or captivate all hearts!

TO

THE SAME.

In her face, see! humanity smiles!
  In her breast lives mild virtue enshrin'd
Her voice even sorrow beguiles,
  And her form is as pure as her mind.

When oppress'd by misfortune and grief,
  To this angel of pity then go,
Bless the bounty that gives thee relief,
  And the tears of compassion that flow!

THE END.

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